

Coach House Church BEACONS

STILL CONTENT

22ND APRIL 2020

The very name 'Beacons' suggests a bright light in the darkness, somehow defiant against the surrounding blackness - a torch being lit to relay a message, either of warning or of hope.

I always imagine the beacons being lit on the mountains in the Film Lord of the Rings – signalling hope to come and bringing joy to those who saw the lights shining with hope against the odds.

We hope that the beacons does that for you as well as you listen to the words, designed to bring us good news, hope and to keep us connected.

In the film (and and as it was in days of old), when the fire was seen at the highest point, it was the signal for the next one in line to be lit lit and so the news progressed from mountain to mountain – spreading the news far and wide – keeping everyone connected.

It is our desire that you feel 'connected' by these offerings.

Talking about being connected.....For my time today I want to connect back to one of my previous thoughts and tell you about some influences for good in my life.

The people who influenced me may not have known it at the time, but I know the affect it has had on me.

So where to begin....

Well first I want to look at a peculiarity that we have with the English language.

Having contact with various foreign students in our house makes you acutely aware that many words we use have two completely different meanings..

I know... you've fallen foul of this yourself haven't you?

And I don't simply mean words that have changed their meaning over time either .. just the same word that means different things depending how it is used.

One such word and the subject of one of my previous beacons is 'content'.

If you look yup the word in a dictionary you will find two very distinct meanings.

Content (adjective)- willing to accept something; satisfied. Eg. We are content with life

Content (noun)- the things that are held or included in something. Eg, Soya milk has a low fat content. Confusing eh?

In a previous beacon, I spoke about learning to be content, or satisfied with what we have and I want to spend a little more time on this, as it touches on the people who have been an influence in my life – don't worry – I will connect back to the peculiarity in our language.

So here we go....

When I was younger and attending secondary school, I wasn't a bad lad, just exuberant and perhaps plagued with the 'do now - think later' kind of attitude, which I think is still part of my character.

At school though, were a group of people who I looked at and was jealous of.... I wanted to be part of their 'gang' – there was something about them that made them different to everyone else.

They seemed really happy with each others company, they were smiling (most of the time!) they just genuinely looked ... wellcontent. Satisfied with who they were and comfortable with each other.

I would later find myself as part of this group and attended a youth club on a Friday night, where I met the people who probably became the greatest influences on my life.

The leaders of this 'Friday Club', which include my now Father in Law , just seemed to put themselves out for all the teenagers that came through the door. There was nothing to much for them and we were genuinely loved for who we were.

The only thing that was asked of us (and at times there were over 100 of us) was that we sat respectfully for 10mins each Friday whilst they told us about this man called Jesus.

What I know now, but didn't quite compute then, was that it was their relationship with Jesus that made them act in the way they did.

I suppose it was the feeling of being loved and looked out for that made the group so united and keen to be together..... they had found a level of contentment and acceptance.

As time went on I came to meet and receive Jesus myself. I suppose the journey started back then when I saw something in this group that I knew was good – my search for contentment had started.

What I have since realised is that I have actually changed.

The contentment I have comes from being made complete – like finding the missing piece that makes a jigsaw complete and whole. Jesus makes me complete.

And He makes me stand out.

It says in the Bible in James chapter 2 that Abraham was shown to be right with God by his actions.

James 2 v 22

....you see His (abrahams) faith and his actions worked together. His actions made his faith complete.

What impressed me most about those leaders, was that their actions, there love for us in providing a safe haven every Friday night – regardless of how we sometimes behaved – showed that they had also been changed by their belief in Jesus.

What I have come to realise is that we as Christians, are content, because of our content.

We are made complete, by Jesus in us, and having Jesus in our lives, changes how we act...

We can't have one without the other – they are complimentary.

Which is why the Bible tells us that by our fruit will we be known. What we show outwardly is the proof of what is within. We are content (satisfied with our life) because of our content (having the Holy Spirit within us making us more like Jesus) Now that....is truly amazing.

In 1 Timothy 6 v 17 Paul gives his student Timothy some good advise..

Teach those that are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in money which is s unreliable, Their trust should be in God who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment (or happiness – or contentment)

Lets pray together.

Father God, thank you for Jesus, who paid the price to bring us peace and reconcile us to You. Thank you for the Holy Spirit who constantly works in us to change us and help us when we fail. We bring our faults and failings to you and ask that ask that you would act in grace and mercy towards us. We pray in these times that hearts will turn towards you, that the reality of your peace in our hearts, is outworked before men. That people will see and understand that you make the difference in our lives. You help us to be content with what we have and you give us a hope which is steadfast with a promise of eternity with you. Thank you Jesus Amen



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